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A
LETTER
FROM
TRUTH
TO A
MEMBER of the *ROSE-CLUB*.



(Price Four-Pence.)

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

J. E. T. H. R.

1907

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A

L E T T E R

F R O M

T R U T H,

T O A

Member of the *Rose-Club.*

From my Pit in Darbyshire.

S I R,



HO' I seldom trouble those that are engaged in great Assemblies, as knowing it generally to be but lost Labour; yet so much have I observed of your Inclinations towards Me, from the Uneasiness I

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see

Vol 1 / sc Blackwell 11 Apr 1986 # 134.77

see you always lie under while you are acting contrary to my Interest; and am so persuaded, That, if you are not at all Times equal in your Attachment to me, it is more from the Infection of those you are engaged with in the Publick Scene of Action, than from any Perverseness or Pravity in your own Temper; that I will for once transgress my Rule of never finding those that do not seek for me, and expose my self to the Danger of a Repulse, which if I am to meet with from you, I shall never make the like Attempt again. To you then, Sir, I will venture to unbosom my self, and open to you all my Grievs; and if you shall have ever heard of any one, that has made more generous Attempts for the Good of Mankind, and has been more ungratefully requited than Me, I give you leave to neglect and despise me.

To begin my History then: When first I left my quiet and peaceful Habitations to take upon me the Care of Men, I was courted and sought after by every Body. The Few, to whom I appeared, described me to others in such an enchanting Manner, that every one, that heard of me, was enamoured with my Character, and was passionately desirous to see me. But it was to a Few only, that I dared to venture to
show

show my self. I knew what difference there was in the Tastes of Men: I knew, That the Plainness and Simplicity of my Dress, which took so much with the Wise and Intelligent, would be slighted and despised as Nakedness and Poverty by the greatest Part. And therefore, when my Friends used to press me in the most urgent manner to make my Publick Entry into the World, and were sure, that if I would but once show My self, all Men would immediately come under my Dominion, for a long Time I withstood their Intreaties, and assured them, that both they and I should lose our Credit by such a hasty Discovery. And accordingly it proved; for when at length I consented, and appeared, With what Surprize was I received, not of Admiration and Esteem, but of Disappointment and Contempt? The Crowds would not believe that it was I my self, and could discover nothing that answered the Glorious Descriptions they had heard: The Politicians knew me, but were frightened at the Sight, and encouraged the Crowds in their Disbelief, reckoning all their Power and Government for lost, if I should gain any Credit with them: The Managers of Religion, who soon discerned something Terrible in my Looks, that
 presaged

presaged Ruin to all that they had for
 many Ages been building up, treated me
 as an Impostor. The Professors of Arts and
 Sciences perceiving they had been all their
 Lives contradicting me, were very appre-
 hensive of my having any Influence over
 Men. My Friends hung down their
 Heads, and were ashamed of having exposed
 me to such open Disgrace; till I encouraged
 them, and told them, “ not to fancy, That
 “ my Party among Men would be at all les-
 “ sened by the seeming Desertion of These;
 “ for that none of These had ever esteemed,
 “ or even known me, or understood their
 “ Descriptions of me; but had only been
 “ enamoured with a Phantom of their own
 “ making, which they had mistaken for
 “ me; otherwise they would never have
 “ expected to have seen me any Thing
 “ different from what I appeared, nor
 “ been shocked at the Plainness of my Fi-
 “ gure”. However, thus was I left by
 all the World: The Crowds dispersed at
 first sight of Me, without farther Enqui-
 ry: The Politicians indeed, when they
 had scattered the Crowds, and recovering
 from their first Fright, had observed me a
 little, for a while fancied I might be of
 some Service to them, could they entirely
 keep me to themselves; till finding me to
 thwart

thwart all their Ambitious and Selfish Views, and obstinate and inflexible in my Maxims, they at length resolved to banish me entirely out of the World. They were joined by the Artists and Masters of Sciences, who could not bear the Thoughts of having lost all their Time in fruitless Studies ; and so, tho' they could not but confess my Beauty , yet not willing to give up their Errors, they thought, that hiding me from the Eyes of Men, was the surest way to perpetuate their own Esteem. But the Managers of Religion were my warmest Enemies ; they even turned Pale at the sight of me , as I wept to see how barbarously they used Religion, whom they had made their Slave ; They would listen to no Accommodation, but were for destroying me immediately, or at least, for chaining me up in such a manner, that I should never be able to stir abroad, but with their Permission, and within the Limits they should set me, which to my Free Nature would be worse than Death it self. I saw nothing was to be done with any of them ; so I took my Flight, and left them consulting against me : And ever since have I been a Vagabond on the Earth, and, like my Great Patron of old, not been able to find a Hole

where to lay my Head. I have tried every Avenue to the Heart of Man, but found them all strictly guarded against me, as if I were the Enemy most to be fear'd. And yet to my Surprize, I found those who shunned me most, continually mentioning me in their Discourse, and enlarging the most in my Commendation. But on Examining, I perceived it was not Me they extolled, but a Creature of their own forming, that they passed upon the World for Me. For having found me of such an intractable Nature, and yet knowing the Influence that my Name has, even upon those that are not at all acquainted with me, they were resolved to make use of it for their own Purposes; and accordingly they dressed up a Pageant, which they proclaimed for me; and easily got all the World to submit to it. Had you seen that Creature and Me together, what a Difference might you have discerned between us? Me you would have seen all Simplicity and Nature: Her all Artifice and False Ornament, covered with a Tinsel, that only dazzled the Eyes of the Beholders, and concealed from them the real Meaness of her Figure. Yet she was receiv'd with Applause, while I was scouted and hissed off the Stage. She got Power and Laws

to her side, and abounded in Honours and Riches; while I was for many Ages wandring about Naked and Poor, and neglected; seeking out in vain for Friends, but never finding any: Till at length, when Learning reviv'd a little, some few began to own me, but with such Fear and Trembling, that I made very small Advances by their Patronage. In some Countries where I was beginning to gain Ground, I was quickly exterminated again by the Managers of Religion, who had entirely enter'd into the Interest of my Antagonist. Judicatories, which they call'd Inquisitions, with their Racks and Tortures, dispatch'd the stoutest of my Friends, and so frightned the rest, that in a short Space of Time, I was left without a Soul to stand by me. When I forsook those scorching Climates, in hopes of breathing a softer Air, among those who went by the Name of Protestants, I met with yet greater Disappointment from the Injuries of these pretended Friends, than ever I had done from the open Opposition of my avowed Enemies. They had acquired, I found, the Name of Protestants, from their having protested against the Spiritual Tyranny of their former Rulers. But I soon perceived, that, tho' my Name was frequent-

ly bandied about among them, the Dispute was very little concerned about me, and was really no other, than who should get that Temporal Dominion in Spiritualls; which whoever obtained, there was quickly an End on their side of all Allarms and Exclamations against Tyranny: For it appeared, that it was only Tyranny, when it was exercised *over them*, and not at all so when exercised *by them* over others. I travers'd every Country and Town I could hear of, where there were any of that Profession, but in every one of them was met by *Tyranny* and *Nonsense*, my old Antagonists, who, I found, still kept Possession, and had only changed their Masters and their Name: For *Tyranny* had concealed its self under the specious Appearance of *Peace* and *Order* in the *Church*; and *Nonsense* had taken the solemn Shape of *Articles* of *Doctrine*, and *Confessions* of *Faith*. And by this dark and concealed Method, they enabled those, who in return nourished them, and made them thrive, to govern Mankind in a more easy and less invidious Manner, tho' not a jot less absolute, than what they had been governed in before. For tho' they would not, or dared not, assume

assume so much to themselves, as to command others, yet they might direct and advise with an Authority not to be resisted, since they always promised, and professed to direct and advise right ; which answered all Ends of Tyranny as much as the other. And tho' they did not pretend to silence Men's private Judgments, yet they might point out to them which Way they were to use them, and with a Judiciousness not to be contested, mark out before them the Boundaries of Truth and Falshood, Right and Wrong, as they judged fit, since they had spent all their Lives in studying such Matters, and must be allowed to have more Skill in them than the Vulgar could possibly attain to ; which was sufficient for every Purpose or Increase of Nonsense. These two Enemies of mine quickly made every Place too hot for me : They branded me with a Thousand odious Names ; in some Places I was Heresy, in others Schism ; sometimes I was an Enemy to the State, and always to the Church ; the very Boys of the Street were ready to stone me as I passed along ; in many Places I was threatened in the Old Way, with Fire and Faggot, in others again only with Whips and Dungeons ; but no where was I suffered to have any Rest, or to make any Stay : Those

that knew me, dar'd not own my Acquaintance, for fear of being Partners of my Ill-Fortune. Quite cast down with these Discouragements, and seeing no Prospect of Hope, I was resolving to leave Mankind to themselves, and to repair to my old peaceful Habitations; when I heard of a Fortunate Island, that I was told, wanted my Assistance, and would joyfully receive me; where if I could once fix my Throne, I should soon extend my Conquests to the Ends of the Earth. I resolv'd to make this my last Attempt upon Mankind; and if this fail'd of Success, I determin'd to have never any thing more to do with them. So thither without delay I took my Flight, and arriv'd there at a Time when it had just undergoen a Great Revolution of Government, in which had been made the most glorious Defence of Liberty that ever was. I found the People in the best Disposition imaginable; And if a right Advantage had been taken of the then present Situation of Affairs, you would not now have heard of me from a dark Hole in *Darbyshire*, but you would have seen me Triumphant and Flourishing in every Part of your Island. It was Fear and Folly, cover'd under the Name of Caution, that spoil'd all then; and if you don't take care, will spoil every Thing yet. When first I appear'd among them

them, every one pressed who should be forwardest to embrace me ; they were for Extirpating immediately *Tyranny* and *Nonsense*, whom they now looked upon not as my Enemies only, but their own ; and who had left behind them such sensible Marks of their Administration, that they were not then at all disposed to venture upon them again. They loaded me with Carresses and Promises : And nothing would serve them but immediately Erecting my Throne, setting me up to Govern, and Demolishing every Thing that opposed me. But before I would meddle in their Affairs, I demanded of them as a previous Step, if they intended to obey me, to remove all Penal Laws that had ever been made under pretence of clearing Men's Understandings, but really to darken and confound them. " I told them, that Liberty
 " was as necessary to Me as Food was to
 " Men ; that I could never possibly thrive
 " without it ; and that every Force upon
 " Men, tho' it were to acknowledge Me
 " my self, was a Wound to my very Vi-
 " tals. I pressed into every Club and As-
 " sembly to ring this in all their Ears ;
 " that it was in vain to proffer me Power
 " any other Way ; and that, if they did
 " not

“ not take this Method, I should quickly
 “ leave them to the Dominion of their old
 “ Masters again. The Universities were
 the only Places that I left unattempted,
 my Interest and theirs being so incompati-
 ble, that I knew we never could be Friends :
 For as I endeavour always to speak Plainly
 and Honestly to the Minds of Men ; as I
 use no Disguise nor Artifice, but come di-
 rectly to the Matter in Question ; so on
 the contrary, all their Skill and Dexterity,
 which they were once so famous for teach-
 ing (tho’, God knows, there is very little
 even of that learn’d amongst them now ;) I
 say, all the Skill and Dexterity they
 pretend to, consists in knowing how to evade
 and escape me ; or if they rarely happen,
 in the Variety of Wrangling, to fall on
 Pursuit of Me, to do it with so many
 Windings and Turnings, and to Figure out
 such Labyrinths, that the By-Standers shall
 never be able to guess what they would be
 at, nor they themselves perhaps know where
 they are, and certainly those that are to
 follow them shall have very good Luck, if
 they don’t always lose their Way. There-
 fore I thought it in vain to court Those,
 whose whole Gain lay in puzzling and per-
 plexing me ; and when I knew how little
 they esteemed me, to desire them on my Ac-
 count

count to put an End to all their Disputes, to throw up their Syllogisms and Distinctions, their Predicaments and Predicables, and the rest of their Antick Artillery, by which they had so long made such Noise, and gained such Credit with the Ignorant World. But as I did not lose my Time in courting them, so neither have they lost theirs in opposing Me ; but, knowing how much their Reputation depended on Ignorance, they have left no Stone in the Island unturned against Me, and in Defence of that ; they have not ceased ever since with unwearied Diligence to represent Me in each Corner of the Isle, as an Enemy both to Religion and Government, and to clamour it to every body they met, that if I were thus licensed to stroll about, and let Idle Fellows pretend to a Right to converse with Me, and be directed by Me, there would be soon an End of all Uniformity, both in Profession and Worship, which is all they mean by Religion ; and of all Obedience to Government, which with them stands only for Slavish Submission to such Governors as they themselves think fit to approve of. (For, with them, if Men don't appear to have any System about Religion different from theirs, it is all a Matter, whether they have any, or none ; and, if Men will not Rebel against

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their

their Governors, till they give the Watch Word, it is all the Obedience they insist upon.) These Nurseries of False Learning were the Sanctuaries of *Tyranny* and *Nonsense*, when they were forced to retire from every other Part of the Island; and from thence they have been ever since making numberless Sallies to recover their lost Authority; and with that Success, that if some things, that you know, had not intervened, they had surely by this Time gained a full Restoration, together with their *delightful Master*. But to return to my History: Tho' I did not think it worth my while to make any Essay on them, yet there was another Body of Men, who professing themselves Teachers of Truth, I thought my self obliged not to neglect them; but I found them so infected with the Poison of those Seminaries, where they had all been bred, that I found very little Hopes of doing any Good by their Means. Nay, I could not so much as get Admission into their Assemblies; for when once I ventured to step into One of them, and, pleased with the sight of so many awful and important Aspects, did not doubt of a kind Reception, I was immediately met by a strange Creature with a Wand in his Hand, who told me, that, not being a Member of that Venerable Society,

ciety, I could not according to the standing Orders of their House be permitted to stay there. I turned my self next to a much greater Assembly, who had not altogether so much Terror in their Faces, and seemed much more inclinable to receive me : But even there I observed a Universal Start at my first Appearance. However, they allowed me to speak, and heard me patiently : But, when I had done, some of the Graver Sort stood up and told me, " That, tho' what I proposed in Favour of
 " Liberty was Just and True, yet the
 " Times were not yet settled enough to
 " make it Safe for them to follow my Di-
 " rections ; but they would go as far as
 " they dared at such a Critical Juncture ". And accordingly a kind of Toleration was granted to some few trifling Differences in Opinion ; and Men were allowed in some very inconsiderable Matters to chuse for themselves, without the Argument of a Jail or Fine to encounter with. But when I farther insisted on a Real and Universal Liberty, as that without which I could be of no Service to them, I was still put off with this Excuse, that I must have a little Patience, for that it was not yet Time. And Patience I had for above Twenty Years, without ever feeling the least Effect of it, or ever seeing the Time come, when it was Time. At last, indeed,

another Time I saw come, when even that Glimpse of Toleration, which I had obtained before, was taken away again, and Persecution fairly restored ; only with this Difference, that the Punishment, which before had been Jayls and Fines, was turned into, I think, the heavier one; of an Exclusion from serving the Publick, or receiving Benefits from it. Then I lost all Patience indeed, and retired to this Dark Pit in *Darbyshire*, where now I am, and resolve to remain, till I see all those Inhuman Laws repealed, and Liberty brought back in Triumph. Long ago would I have forsaken your Island, had it not been for One or Two brave Spirits in your Capital, who give me some Hopes of seeing better Days ; who were never afraid of owning Me, whatever Disgrace or Neglect I underwent, or whatever Ill Usage They themselves met with on my Account ; and who, God be thanked, now have Weight and Authority enough to do me some Service. I expected, indeed, when I heard of a Happy Change lately among you, with the Lamentations of my Enemies upon it, I expected, I say, that Liberty was soon to have had a real and lasting Establishment ; And I ventured out of my Pit, to see what Progress was making towards it. But to my Grief I found nothing of that sort was like
to

to be done ; but that my Friends themselves were the chief Obstacles of it : And I returned hither again in deep Melancholy, as soon as I perceived the Disposition you were in. I thought; if so many of my professed Friends, as you were, had not the Courage to stand by me, even when you had all Power on your side, when you had a P R I N C E, who has ever shown a Passion for my Interests, as I have always supported his ; who bears my very Image in the Features of his Face ; who was ready to do any thing you would permit him for strengthening my Cause ; with a *Son* who gave you such Hopes, that he would follow the same Maxims with his Father ; and a *Princess* to animate you; that had already rejected a Crown for me, and by her Diligence in the Education of her Children, was taking Care that I should not want even the remotest Security ; I say, if with all this Support, you had not Courage to stand by me, I thought I could have nothing more to hope for from you. I can assure you, the Injury you then did me, touched me more sensibly, than all that my Enemies had ever done. They could never have hurt me, but by your Assistance. They only forced me to retire a little, but your Fear makes their Victory now compleat. They only blocked me up for a while, but your Desertion was betray-
ing

ing me, and delivering me up into their Hands. And therefore, you may depend upon it, I shall never trust my self among you, till you restore Liberty, and Toleration, which is the first Step to it. Establish Toleration again, and you shall see me appear; and then Establish Liberty in all its Extent, and you shall see me Flourish, and make you Flourish with me. For, think what you please, how little soever you may value me, our Fortunes are more closely united, than perhaps you imagine; and our Enemies are always the same. Those that hate you, I don't know by what Chance, hate Me too. Those that would destroy me, would likewise enslave you. And therefore you need not be afraid of increasing my Party too much; for you only augment your own; nor can you ever be secure your selves, till you exalt me. That Spirit of Popery and Tyranny which you hate so much, and yet Support, has as Evil an Eye on your Happiness, as it has on my Power. It knows, that it can never subdue your Understandings, where all my Dominion lies, without being first Master of your Bodies; nor bring you under Slavery one way, while it leaves you Free another. If therefore you have any Regard to your own Liberty and Happiness, take my Advice, and suffer me to give you some Directions

rections how to behave your self at present. If You reject my Offer, I shall attempt no one else, (for I know none of Your sort, that I am like to have more Influence upon than You;) but I shall quickly leave your Island, and, I dare say, shall soon be followed by Liberty and Happiness, and every Thing else that you would desire to keep. But I will not despair, till you force me to it; and if You will attend to me a little, I will instruct You with such Rules as shall never more leave you in Danger of losing Me, or being led away from Me. First then, Fix this with Your Self as a constant and unmoveable Maxim, That Liberty must always have its full Extent, and must lye under no Restraints, nor can ever possibly be maintained in Part. Act steadily upon this Principle, and You will soon see Me restored to the World; or at least You your self will possess Me with all the Pleasure and Happiness that accompanies Me. And be not frightned from this by any solemn Face, that may study to create in You a Gloom of Veneration for something, you don't know what; but turn away and fly the Infection, till You feel Your Self sufficiently guarded by my Influence to withstand it. Ghastly Looks, and Horrid Appearances are ever the Fore-runners of Tyranny and Nonsense; and, tho' they always

ways proclaim My Name before them, it is only to impose upon Mankind, who the more readily submit to them, while they are made to believe, that it is I, by whom they are to be governed. But when You come once to be thoroughly acquainted with Me, those Spectres immediately lose their Terror ; the Charm dissolves, and they turn the Subject of your Ridicule and Laughter : For, tho' real Gravity, and serious Enquiry, are my very good Friends, yet They are Such as carry a Human Countenance along with them, can bear with Mirth, and are often seen to laugh Themselves at such Mimical Figures as Those. Never therefore be afraid of Enquiring or Examining into any Thing that pretends to come from Me, how venerable soever an Aspect it may bear ; for if it had its Original really from me, it will be able to stand all such Tests ; and if it cannot, That is a certain Mark that it had never any thing to do with me : Nay, there is no other way of being sure that any Thing does proceed from Me, but by so trying it. If again, another sort of People, That pretend to be my greatest Friends and Supporters, endeavour to seduce you, by professing an unmeasured Zeal for Me, and protesting, that they mean nothing but my Interests, and would only force Men to submit to my Power ; remember, I tell you,

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they

they are My most dangerous Enemies. For, whether they be sincere, or not, it is the same to me; They equally obstruct my Service. I can stand upon no such Basis, as They would erect for me. I vanish at the sight of Violence, and Darknes and Passion take my Place. If I bear any Rule, it must be in the Breast of every Man; and, as I can never take Satisfaction in the mere show of Dominion, so it is not enough for me, that none dare openly contradict or oppose Me. On the contrary, I esteem that Enmity the most Dangerous, that is forced to be kept Secret and Close, and, in the Nature of an Ambuscade, lets me not know where to meet my Enemy, and yet leaves me constantly in Danger of being oppress'd by him. Or, suppose these Friends of mine should be able to destroy all Opposition against themselves, what am I to gain by their Victory? All that they do, when they have conquered, is at best to set up the Dominion of Something, that they perhaps take for Me and, (in that they are as liable as others to Blunders and Mistakes;) or, if they should happen to light upon Me, to make Men obey Me as far as they think I desire to prescribe; and my Power must be just of the same Extent with their Understandings. And do you imagine I can bear to be confined within such narrow Bounds,

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or

or will ever trust my Authority with Others on such doubtful Terms? If at any time These sort of People disturb you with their Cruel Zeal for Me, answer Them, that Truth Her Self has told you, She would not be so defended. Tell them, that I esteem Those who set up to govern Others, under pretence of being always governed by Me, no less my Enemies, than Those, who pretend Themselves to govern Me. All the Difference is; the One fairly dethrone Me; the Others preserve Me on my Throne, but take all Power from Me to Themselves, and only carry on the Pageantry of my Sovereignty, to satisfy their own Exorbitant Ambition, and Love of Dominion. Suffer not yourself to be led away by such Pretences; but stand firm for Liberty, as the only true Means of gaining me Interest and Authority with Men: And never fancy it possible to beat me down with one Hand, and keep me up with the other; as they do, who pretend to support Me, at the same Time that they subvert Liberty. You have another sort of People among you, that You must be no less aware of, who, tho' they are not my real Enemies, as the others I have mentioned, yet are of equal Prejudice to my Cause, by their Fear and pretended Caution. They are for doing the Thing, for setting me up on the right bot-
tom

tom of Universal Liberty; but they always see a Thousand Dangers in the Attempt. Their Eyes are open to every Possible Ill Event that may happen, if they should go about it; but at the same Time blind to the Necessary and Fatal Consequences of not doing it, and leaving Me to be trampled upon by my Enemies, and Theirs. They cannot see, that every Wound they suffer to be given Me, or to remain unhealed in Me, is a Stab in their own Breast; that I have been their only and their constant Support, and therefore deserting Me, is forsaking themselves; that Those, whom they add Strength to, by such Timidity, are Enemies to their Liberty, as well as to mine; and Those, whom they weaken, are their Friends, perhaps more than mine; that, in short, if they do not quickly retrieve Matters, both I and They shall sink together; and losing Time at Present, will certainly prove Loss of all. I persuade my self, You are not to be moved by so mean an Argument, as that of Fear, and especially so ill grounded. If I had thought You of that Temper, I should scarce have troubled you. A Mistake in your Understanding I might have cleared; but Cowardliness is capable of no Conviction: For, tho' the Thing were made appear ever so Practicable and Easy to be done; yet Fear will form Dan-
gers

gers where there are None, and enlarge them to a prodigious Bulk, where there are the Least. I could extend my self, Sir, a great deal farther, and lead you thro' many new and unbeaten Ways, with much Pleasure to Your Self and Me. But all will be to no Purpose, till Liberty be once fully established; and, unless that were done, would only make you uneasy, by giving you the Prospect of a certain distant Happy State, that you can't arrive at for want of it. If That be once settled, I will come among you in Person, and You shall want for no Instructions, how to be either Knowing or Happy. But here I shall remain, without ever expecting to see that Time, till I see you make the first Step towards it, in repealing That which I call A *Law* against Me, but You call, A *Bill* against *Occasional Conformity*.

F I N I S.



